

XXXVIII.—*A new Cricetulus from Mongolia.*

By OLDFIELD THOMAS.

AMONG a small collection of rodents from N.E. Siberia presented to the National Museum by Mr. C. W. Campbell there are two specimens of a *Cricetulus* which appears to be undescribed. It may be called

*Cricetulus Campbells*, sp. n.

Closely allied to *C. songarus*, Pall., which alone of described species has completely hairy palms and soles. Colour and markings apparently much as in that species, the characteristic light patches on shoulders, sides, and hips contrasting prominently with the body-colour, but the dark shoulder-stripe of *C. songarus* is less developed and the dorsal line is narrower and more sharply defined. Back greyish buffy; a prominent black dorsal line commencing faintly on the crown, becoming sharply defined on the nape, and running to the base of the tail. Lateral patches creamy buff, the grey areas dividing them but slightly darkened. Belly-hairs slaty basally, "cream-buff" terminally. Ears small, much smaller than in the true *C. songarus*; their colour as described in *C. dichrootis*, Satunin\*, the black of the front half of the outer surface contrasting markedly with the white of the hinder edge of the inner. Upper surface of hands and feet silvery white. Palms densely hairy, but the tips of the digits, the usual three small pads at the base of the fingers, the very large hallucal and small median carpal pads naked. Similarly, behind, the soles are densely hairy, the tips of the digits and three small distal pads alone naked. Tail very short, about half the length of the hind foot, club-shaped, silvery whitish.

Skull short, the brain-case proportionally large and rounded. Palatal foramina parallel-sided. Bullæ very small.

Dimensions of the type (measured as a spirit-specimen):—

Head and body 87 mm.; tail 7; hind foot 12; ear 11.

Skull: greatest length 24; basilar length 19; zygomatic breadth 13·7; length of nasals 9; interorbital breadth 3·7; breadth of brain-case 11·4; palate length 9·8; diastema 6·4; palatal foramina 4·1 × 1·6; length of upper molar series 3·5.

*Hab.* Shaborte, N.E. Mongolia (about 46° 40' N., 114° E.). A second specimen from Tatir Suma.

*Type.* Male (skinned out of spirit). B.M. no. 5. 2. 1. 3.

\* Ann. Mus. Pétersb. vii. p. 567 (1902).

Collected 1st July, 1902, and presented by C. W. Campbell, Esq., C.M.G.

This very handsome little species seems alone allied to *C. songarus*, Pall., and *C. dichrootis*, Sat., but may be readily distinguished from the former by its smaller ears and rather different colour, and from the latter by its more completely hairy soles and its prominent dorsal line.

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XXXIX.—*The Affinities of the Orkney Vole* (*Microtus orcadensis*, Millais). By C. I. FORSYTH MAJOR.

IN a joint paper by Mr. Eagle Clarke and Professor Charnock Bradley are published some new and interesting observations on the Orkney vole discovered by Mr. Millais in the Orkneys and certain parts of Shetland\*. I have had an opportunity to verify the accuracy of the facts communicated, but I venture to take exception to the interpretation given to these facts, as being intended to throw light on the affinities of the species. By representing the Orkney vole as being in some respects an intermediate form of the field- and the water-vole, but more nearly allied to the latter, a misleading conception of its true affinities is conveyed.

The two British species just mentioned are so widely apart from each other that they have been placed into two distinct sections (subgenera) of the genus *Microtus*. Now the Orkney vole, by its external characters (number of foot-pads on the hind sole, absence of abdominal musk-glands), as well as by the character of its teeth, is clearly a member of the same subgenus as the field-vole, and therefore much nearer related to the latter than to the water-vole. The peculiarities of its skull by no means contradict this statement. Great width of the skull, relative shortness of the brain-case, and elongation of the rostrum, are not peculiarities proper to the water-vole alone; they occur in other subgenera also. Within the subgenus to which our common field-vole (*M. agrestis*) belongs it is the *M. arvalis* and its allies, one of the field-voles of Continental Europe and Northern Asia, which the Orkney vole approaches most in the characters of

\* "On the Vole and Shrew of the Orkney Islands," by Wm. Eagle Clarke. With Report by Prof. O. Charnock Bradley, M.B., C.M. (Reprinted from 'The Annals of Scottish Natural History,' January 1905.)